

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-14 DPW-01 SCA-01 OMB-01 AID-20

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /152 W

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R 151020Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9002

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCPAC

CDR USSAG NKP

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 3864

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, LA

SUBJECT: PATHET LAO CAME TO DINNER

1. LAST NIGHT I HOSTED A DINNER IN HONOR OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER/FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUMI VONGVICHIT, THE HIGHEST RANKING COMMUNIST REPRESENTATIVE IN THE PGNU. ALSO PRESENT WERE MINISTER OF PLAN AND NATIONAL ECONOMY SOTH PHETRASY (ALSO PATHET LAO) AND MINISTER OF FINANCE NGON SANANIKONE.

2. THE DINNER PROCEEDED IN A REMARKABLE ATMOSPHERE OF CONVIVIALITY AND FRANKNESS, ALTHOUGH WE DID NOT DISCUSS ANY MAJOR SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS DURING ITS COURSE. NGON SANANIKONE WAS IN HIGH FORM AND ENLIVENED THE EVENING WITH A VARIETY OF TALES, HELPING CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH BOTH PHOUMI AND SOTH APPEARED AT EASE AND READILY PARTICIPATED IN CONVERSATION.

3. I GAVE A SHORT TOAST, STRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF ESTABLISHING CORDIAL AND COOPERATIVE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS
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BETWEEN AMERICANS AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE NEW COALITION

GOVERNMENT SO THAT WE COULD WORK TOGETHER TO HELP LAOS REPAIR THE WOUNDS OF WAR AND MOVE TOWARD ECONOMIC DEVELOPEMTN AND A BETTER LIFE FOR ITS PEOPLE. THIS THEME OBVIOUSLY STRUCK A RESPONSIVE CHORD AND PHOUMI RETURNED THE TOAST IN THE SAME TERMS, EMPHASIZING IN PARTICULAR HIS GRATIFICATION AT THE CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP HE HAD HAD WITH AMBASSADOR DEAN WHILE THE LATTER WAS CHARGE HERE DURING NEGOTIATION OF THE SEPTEMBER PROTOCOL. WHILE THE GOOD FELLOWSHIP BLOOMED INSIDE, OUTSIDE WERE OVER 30 PATHET LAO GUARDS, MAKING SURE THEIR CHIEF WAS SECURE.

4. COMMENT: I BELIEVE THAT, ON THE BASIS OF MY CALL ON PHOUMI AND LAST NIGHT'S CONGENIAL GATHERING, I AM IN A GOOD POSITION TO TALK TURKEY WITH HIM ABOUT THE RELEASE OF EMMET KAY, EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE THIS ACT WILL HAVE ON THE FUTURE COURSE OF LAO/AMERICAN RELATIONS.
WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL RECEPTIONS, DIPLOMATIC PROTOCOL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974VIENTI03864
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740119-1043
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740544/aaaabnbb.tel
Line Count: 78
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 APR 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PATHET LAO CAME TO DINNER
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, LA, (KAY, EMMET)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005